



File Code: 1950

Date: June 26, 2007

Dear Interested Citizen,

I am writing to inform you of the fish habitat improvement that will be taking place on two unnamed tributaries of the Wild Ammonoosuc River. The White Mountain National Forest is proposing to replace two stream crossings on Forest Road (FR) 171, also known as the Bunga Jar Road.

Purpose and Need

There is a need to restore hydrologic function at the crossing sites of tributary streams of the Wild Ammonoosuc River caused by the placement of undersized culverts. The purpose of redesigning these crossings would be to prevent the possibility of structure failure, which would degrade water quality and aquatic habitat, as well as to restore instream habitat and provide for fish passage.

The proposal is to remove a seven foot diameter round culvert and replace with a portable steel hinged bridge at one tributary, and replace a poorly aligned four and a half foot round pipe at another crossing with a seven foot diameter pipe. If possible the existing seven foot culvert may be used at the other site if high structural integrity of the culvert can be maintained during the removal. These replacements will allow bankfull flows to pass unimpeded which will allow normal sediment movement to occur once again. This will eliminate the high scour below the pipes and the sediment accumulation occurring above the pipes. Restoring these hydrologic processes will eliminate the barriers to fish and other aquatic life movement at these two sites. As part of a larger effort on the White Mountain National Forest, these projects will also serve to demonstrate the latest science in stream crossing management.

The recently revised White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) provides guidance for managing and protecting aquatic resources. Specifically, goals state that the Forest Service will:

- Restore and improve self-sustaining populations of indigenous fish and other aquatic species and their habitats.
- Maintain or improve water quality to protect existing and designated instream water uses such as aquatic life.
- Manage streams at proper functioning condition to dissipate stream energy associated with high water flows, thereby decreasing erosion, reducing flood damage, and improving water quality.



In addition, management guidelines state that all permanent new, redesigned, or reconstructed stream crossings must be designed to pass bankfull flows, withstand expected flood flows, provide for the passage of sediment bedload, woody material, and allow free movement of resident aquatic life.

Project Area

The Project Area is in lands administered by the White Mountain National Forest. The project area to be analyzed is on the Bunga Jar Road (FR 171). The project area is in Grafton County in the town of Benton, NH.

Decisions to be Made

In order to reach a decision, I will consider your input, the recommendations of an interdisciplinary team of resource specialists, and the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and provisions for Categorical Exclusions.

As the Responsible Official, I will decide:

- What mitigation measures and monitoring requirements will help assure the proposed project meets Forest Plan standards and guidelines for all resources.

Based upon the nature of this project it will be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Decisions may be categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS when they are within one of the categories identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 7 CFR part 1b or one of the categories listed in Forest Service Handbook (FSH) Chapter 30, Section 31.2. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal which would require an EA or an EIS. Under the regulation for "Notice, Comment, and Appeal Procedures for National Forest System Projects and Activities; Final Rule (36 CFR 215, Code of Federal Regulations)" published June 4, 2003 in the Federal Register, projects that qualify for this categorical exclusion are not subject to appeal.

As such, this letter will represent your only opportunity to provide comment on this project. Once the analysis is completed, copies of the Decision Memo will be mailed to individuals who submitted comments during this scoping period and to those who requested copies.

What Do We Need From You?

This scoping report summarizes the project proposal. We are soliciting your comments on the proposed activities. After receiving your comment, I will determine the level of mitigation surrounding this project.

As you review this project proposal, you may find that you have information which may be important to consider in arriving at a decision. If you choose to comment on this proposal, I ask you to submit this information, and any other thoughts you may have specific to the project, before July 31, 2007. You will find details on how to comment at the end of this report.

It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period. Comments should be directed to Pemigewasset Ranger District as follows:

- Written comments must be postmarked by the Postal Service by July 31, 2007
 - Letters should be submitted to
Pemigewasset Ranger District
Bunga Jar Aquatic Restoration Project
ATTN: Spencer Bleadorn
1171 NH Route 175
Holderness, NH 03245
 - FAX comments should be sent to 603-536-5147, ATTN: Spencer Bleadorn, no later than 11:59 P.M. on July 31, 2007
 - E-mail comments should include an identifiable name and be sent to:
sbleadorn@fs.fed.us, no later than 11:59 P.M. on July 31, 2007
- Oral comments may be submitted Monday through Friday 8:00am to 4:30pm, either by phone (603-536-1315) or in person before July 31, 2007.

You have received this mailing because you have interest in this type of project on the White Mountain National Forest. You may also have received it because you own land in the vicinity of the proposed project and/or you have visited or expressed interest in this area. We welcome your comments.

For additional information, please refer to the contact information above.

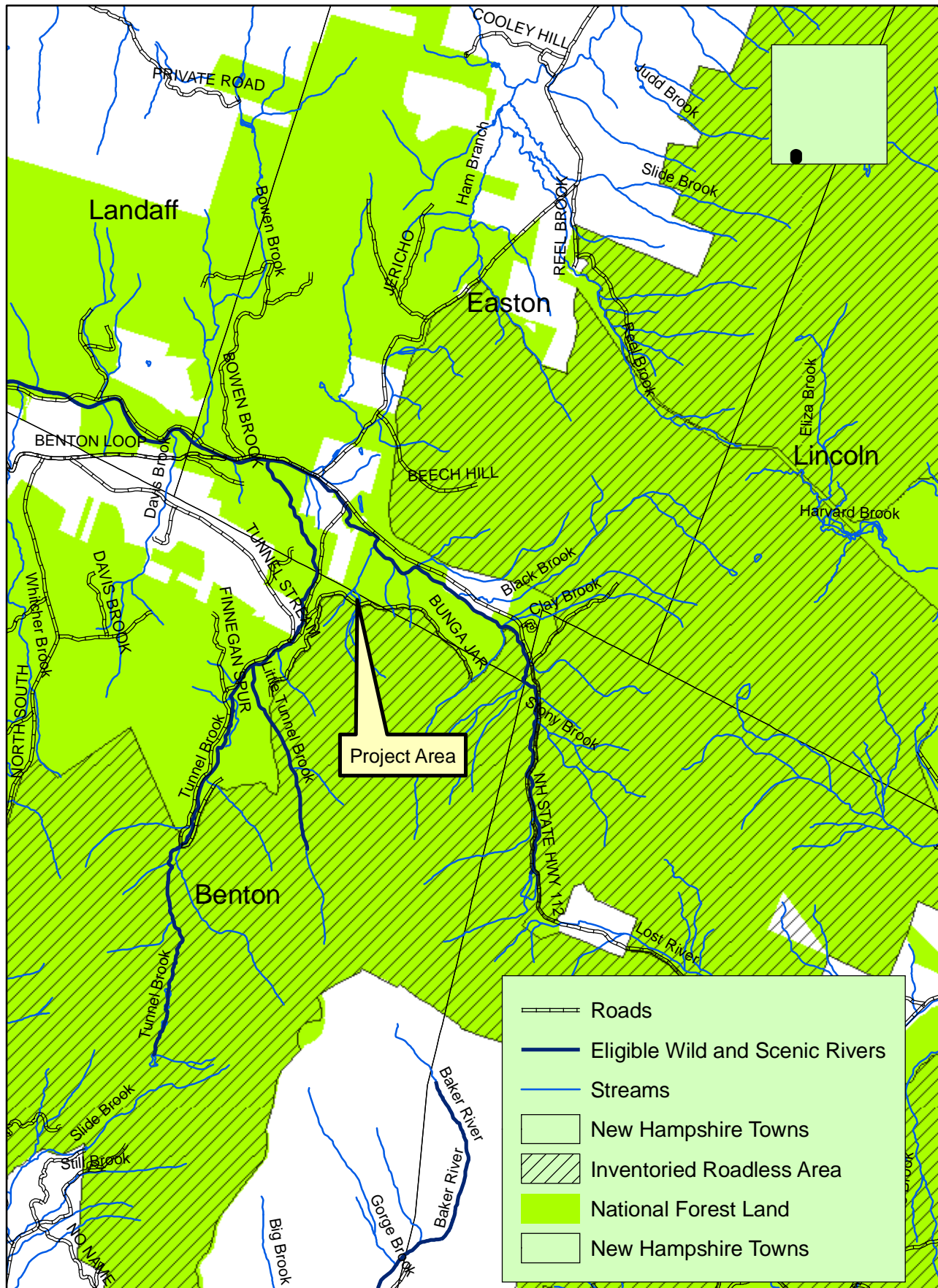
Thank you for your interest in helping us to manage the White Mountain National Forest.

Sincerely,

/S/ BARBARA A. LEVESQUE

BARBARA A. LEVESQUE
Acting District Ranger

Bunga Jar Road Aquatic Restoration Project



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